

2008 Committee of Visitors Report for the Facilities
Programs of the Division of Ocean Sciences
Update of Actions as of October 19, 2009

Findings and Recommendations

Corporate Knowledge of IPS facilities staff.

Action: We will continue to work with WHOI, DESSC and the RHOV AOC on a smooth transition from Navy to ABS certification.

Update: ABS and Navy have both continued to be active participants in the RHOV Project. NSF has monitored this progress during monthly project update teleconferences and several practice sessions in preparation for the December 2009 RHOV Preliminary Design Review.

Funding balance between facilities and research.

Action: We fully agree with the importance of achieving the right balance between science and infrastructure and will be using all the tools available to us at the IPS, OCE and GEO levels, including the efforts of Interagency Working Group on Facilities and the new Ocean Studies Board Project looking at infrastructure issues.

Update: NSF has actively participated in providing data to support the Ocean Studies Board Project, which released its report on October 13, 2009. The report re-affirmed the benefit of the UNOLS consortium and made several recommendations regarding oceanographic research infrastructure. We will continue to work with the other federal agencies on these issues through the Interagency Working Group on Facilities.

Post-cruise assessments (PCA) and Communications.

Action: We will continue working with UNOLS to identify ways to improve the submission rate of PCAs and track actions taken in response to issues identified.

Update: The UNOLS Program Office transferred from Moss Landing Marine Laboratory to the Graduate School of Oceanography University of Rhode Island in May 2009. NSF has re-emphasized the importance of the PCAs to the new Executive Secretary and we have instituted a new approach to data-basing and tracking the high priority issues identified in the PCA reports.

NDSF recommendations.

Action: We will consider and evaluate all available options for the next 5-year NDSF proposal review.

Update: The next NDSF proposal review will be in FY2010 and all available options will be considered.

Streamlining the Tracking of maintenance and upgrades of research vessels.

Action: NSF will remind IPS Program Officers to include documentation in e-jacket on actions taken to address identified problem areas and will keep this recommendation open.

Update: The IPS Program Officers have been reminded to include documentation in e-jacket. In addition, we have instituted a new inspection worksheet data base to evaluate the materiel condition of the ships and to address maintenance and upgrade actions.